

Ag Conference Call Notes

March 21, 2007

9 a.m.

Present: Tom McCarthy, Eric Wiklund, Cindy Martens, Ken Hessenius, Dan Olson, Jerry Jordison, Ted Petersen, Josh Sobaski, Randy Clark, Bob Palla, Gene Tinker and Karen Grimes

Manure application to CRP ground: This is not allowed; do not include CRP fields in the MMP unless they are coming out of the program. Farmers do not purchase commercial fertilizer for CRP, so there is no need to apply manure and there is no yield to base crop nutrient need on. Approval from NRCS would be required and it would be on an emergency use only, approved on a case-by-case basis.

200 A MMP's are getting P-index needed letters. They do not need to do a P-index, but the database was not able to sort this out, so unless the AA catches this they will get a letter. Please just field these calls and explain to the producer why they got the letter. We will try to change this in the database so they are not tracked for P-index plan submittal.

Poultry issues: Josh and Eric did presentations to the Turkey growers in their respective locations.

Cindy has created a letter to be sent to all new poultry facilities or existing facilities that we become aware of that do not have storage for their manure. The letter explains minimum control of manure and the options they have. Poultry manure may not be stockpiled from a confinement facility. Each office should have a copy of this letter for their use. Stacking pads do not need to be covered, but they must meet our concrete standards or if they are earthen they must go through construction permitting for an earthen storage structure. Producers may use existing buildings for storage, but a CDS must be provided. Most new sites are building 4 barns. The need for a statement regarding drainage not being impeded does not apply to these sites unless they are obtaining a construction permit.

Discussion with IDALS confirms that 200A license means that the poultry facility:

1. must have a license from IDALS
2. **must** sell their manure to a third party and give up ownership.
3. stockpiling is limited to 2 days.

Updated Forms: Appendix A8 in the MMP has been updated. Please print new ones for your office. The Construction Permit form has also been updated. Please print these for your office as well.

Soil Sampling & P-index: Soil samples must be taken every four years to be current, but the producer may choose to wait and run the RUSLE2 and P-index calculations until their 4-year cycle requires a new complete MMP to be submitted. Soil samples must be kept on site for review. Items that would warrant a P-index update prior to the 4-year cycle would be adding terraces, going to a corn-on-corn rotation, going out of no till, going to a bean/bean rotation or going from a corn/corn rotation to a corn/bean rotation. A significant soil test increase would also warrant running a new P-index. In some situations, soil tests could change a bit and it could bump results of P index into an area where the producer would have to change application rates. Fields with high P indexes (5 to 10 or more) need to add conservation practices to their conservation plan and document what they will do to reduce P index to under 5.

NMP Chemical Storage Section: There have been questions as to what to put under this category. Provide a general statement indicating what the operator's chemical handling practices are and where the chemicals are stored in relation to the feedlot. State that manure storage areas will not be used for chemical disposal or storage.

Small Open Cattle Lots: There have been some meetings lately to work with open cattle lots of less than 1,000 head. The plan is for education regarding installation of solids settling, keeping manure out of streams, which includes the brown water, etc. There are plans for a small group to meet including DNR, cattle producers, ISU, and ICA to get ideas and facts formulated to proceed. There must be buy-in for this plan to work.

Ag Database: There is a possibility of a completely new database. This is being directed by Wayne G. and will have a new structure and mail merge. They are comparing it to the current contaminated sites database. They will continue exploration, but for the time being the old database will probably function for another 2 or 3 years until a new one can be completed. Funding is an issue and it was noted that field staff thought a long-term contract for support was needed. The current database had a few updates, which include: a new 45-day letter, a new 6-month letter and a new approval letter. The lists for drop down boxes were also expanded to include items pertaining to the P-index. The problem with these lists is that they are getting very long. We are not able to take out items as they may be tied to facilities from previous inspections. (Cindy has given Malia all the lists and she is still in the process of entering these drop down lists.) Although current contractor is finished, staff should continue adding to bug tracker.

P-index Training by ISU: Staff should be supported in their wishes to attend this training.

Cattle Manure: Staff checked with ISU regarding their research on N availability of cattle manure. They state that 45% is available the first year and they continue to stand by this research.

The next Ag Conference Call will be on Monday April 16th. Please mark your calendars.

Submitted by Cindy Martens